

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

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## SD Guard firefighters train, prepare for upcoming deployment

By Spc. Carl Johnson – 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

RAPID CITY, S.D. – South Dakota Army National Guard firefighters trained on structural, vehicle and aircraft burns, vehicle extractions, and confined space rescues in the Rapid City area, May 6-20.

Firefighters with the Rapid City based-216th and 451st Engineer Detachments focused their annual training on preparing for emergency fire-related situations that they may encounter during a deployment.

The training is of particular importance as three Soldiers with the 216th are scheduled to deploy to Romania in July where they will oversee multiple firefighting teams.

“The harder you practice, the more proficient you will be out on the fire grounds,” said Spc. Matthew Komes of the 451st. “It all comes together when we get deployed overseas. Everything we do during annual training is incorporated.”

The firefighters were able to call on multiple resources to augment their training, which included Western Dakota Technical Institute, who provided space for confined space rescue operations and structural burns, said Komes.

The detachments contracted the services of a specialized training simulator, specifically designed to simulate a fire on board an aircraft. This allowed the firefighters to actually enter the aircraft, after suppressing the fire, and conduct clearing operations to enhance the realistic nature of the training.

“The simulator was different than any training the unit’s have ever been through,” said Komes. “When we conduct training at Ellsworth Air Force Base, it involves jet fuel so we aren’t allowed to go into the aircraft. With this new simulator, we are able to go into the aircraft, fight the fire and do our rescues.”

“We train as we fight,” said Sgt. 1st Class Austin Hagen, fire chief for the 216th. “Our guys got to conduct training on an aircraft trainer that we had not seen before. The trainer did an excellent job and our guys got to do some hands on training that we normally don’t get to do.”

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High-resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**170520-Z-FO002-0001:** Firefighters with the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 216th and 451st Engineer Detachments prepare for aircraft fuel spill incident training near Rapid City, S.D., May 20, 2017. Firefighters from the 216th were evaluated on incident command procedures prior to their scheduled deployment to Romania in July. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson)



**170510-Z-TW084-0005:** Firefighters with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 216th and 451st Engineer Detachments use a tactical firefighting truck to fight a simulated aircraft fire near Rapid City, S.D., May 10, 2017. An aircraft fire simulator allowed the firefighters to conduct highly realistic training scenarios. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Austin Pearce)



**170510-Z-TW084-0006:** Firefighters with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 216th and 451st Engineer Detachments use a specialized aircraft fire simulator near Rapid City, S.D., May 10, 2017. The simulator allowed the firefighters to enter the aircraft and conduct rescue operations after suppressing the fire. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Austin Pearce)



**170509-Z-TW084-0004:** Firefighters with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 216th and 451st Engineer Detachments extract a mannequin from a vehicle as a part of their annual training operations near Rapid City, S.D., May 9, 2017. The firefighters of the 216th are scheduled to deploy to Romania in July. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Austin Pearce)



**170509-Z-TW084-0002:** U.S. Army Spc. Adam North, 451st Engineer Detachment, South Dakota Army National Guard, cuts out a windshield during vehicle extrication training near Rapid City, S.D., May 9, 2017. The training helps the firefighters prepare for scenarios they might face during a deployment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Austin Pearce)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,** please contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at (605) 737-6721 or e-mail [ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil)